



# TUFF TIMES



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Spring 2021 Newsletter

Since 1990



## TUFF ACTIVITIES



A Report By : Tony Maher, Director Operations &amp; Membership Services

After a year of challenge and privation for everyone on so many levels, we may, at last, be seeing a way forward with COVID 19. Although we might never revert to the pre-pandemic normal, we will settle to ways of living and working that will, over time, become our new routine. It will be evident from extensive media coverage and personal experience that fraudsters have remained active during the global emergency. Now, more than ever, it is crucial that expert communities like ours remain focused on mitigation strategies and be prepared for any sudden shifts in fraud delivery vectors.

TUFF continues to establish and strengthen ties with like-minded counter fraud organisations nationally and internationally. As part of the ongoing drive to become more agile and potent in the way we address fraud and to bring increased benefit to our members, a specialist TUFF sub-group has been Beta testing the TUFF intelligence sharing database. Results so far have been very encouraging and we hope to outline a plan for adoption of and access to, the database soon.



Our first webinar of the year went ahead on 25 February, with 3 TUFF Directors coming together as a panel to offer their insight on Managing Fraud. I am pleased to note that the event was a great success, with searching questions and knowledgeable answers, which should be seen as a prelude to the TUFF Spring Webinar Series that will run every Thursday from 1100 to 1215 for six weeks, starting on 6 May.



Telecommunications UK Fraud Forum

The Forum of Trust

Home Login About Us Information TUFF Member Only Events

www.tuff.co.uk



TUFF News Forecast of Events Updated – 21/02/2021 OFCOM update added – 03/02/2021 Details of February 25th Members Webinar Added to H

Our main repository for information is still the TUFF Website. We continue to add news, information and articles of interest to the public area and, where appropriate, in the password-protected Member's Area. Do make use of the website and because TUFF membership extends to your company, draw the attention of your colleagues and contacts to it. Please contact Esther ([tuff@tuff.co.uk](mailto:tuff@tuff.co.uk)) If you don't yet have a password to access the Members' Area, or if you need to change your current password.



More than 500 people are following TUFF's LinkedIn pages, which is a great achievement from a standing start. The importance of getting TUFF 'out there' on credible and appropriate social media cannot be over-emphasised as it provides an important gateway and bridge to the broader counter-fraud community. Please read, contribute, share, like and comment on the postings. Inviting your contacts to 'follow' us will help us keep the numbers moving in the right direction.



Cabinet Office



GOV.UK



Home Office

We continue our dialogue with the Cabinet Office and have engaged with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, by offering TUFF's support to future consultations where they apply to fraud in general and telecommunications fraud in particular. We persevere in emphasising the importance of our Specified Anti-Fraud Organisation (SAFO) status, under Section 68 of The Serious Crime Act 2007, and the current under-utilisation of the SAFOs, to the Home Office and potential TUFF supporters.

To close, we exist to serve the TUFF membership, to which end, your thoughts and observations on how we can better work for you are always welcome – [tmaher@tuff.co.uk](mailto:tmaher@tuff.co.uk) Director Operations & Membership Services

### In This Issue

Action Fraud Cases (P2) - IRSF&IRSF Countries (P2) – UK's Response to Cyber Fraud (P3) – Did You Know? (P4)



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## COVID VACCINATIONS SCAMS

A report in corona-virus scams to trick people handing over their bank details was reported 1,000 times in 24 hours. The national reporting center for fraud and cyber-crime has previously warned about corona-virus vaccine scams, with many people reporting receiving fake text messages purporting to be from the NHS.

## ROMANCE FRAUD

### £68 MILLION lost to Romance fraud in 2020

The rise in romance scams comes as more people have turned to online dating during 2020 due to social distancing restrictions. Figures from the Online Dating Association (ODA) estimate that over 2.3 million Brits used dating apps during the first lockdown, with 64 per cent of people

surveyed seeing dating apps as a lifeline for those living alone.

## ATTACK OF THE CLONE WARS

- Number of 'clone firm' investment scams reported increased by 29% as UK went into first lockdown
- Victims scammed out of more than £45,000 each, on average
- 77% of investors do not know or are unsure what a 'clone investment firm' is
- FCA and Action Fraud advise investors to only use contact details on the [FCA Register](#) to help avoid 'clone firm' scams

Action Fraud reporting data reveals losses of more than £78 million<sup>1</sup> between January-December 2020, with victims losing £45,242<sup>1</sup> each on average, when investing with fraudsters imitating genuine investment firms.



## INFORMATION SHARING

### Membership of TUFF helps Provide Intelligence to Members Through Information Sharing

By providing members with a "Forum of Trust" TUFF has been able to bring together individual strands of intelligence relating to fraudulent and criminal activity and not only improve the quality of the intelligence but also ensure that it reaches the parts of the Industry, Law Enforcement and Regulators where it can be used to prevent further harm to consumers as well as businesses.

### Recent IRSF Countries and their Dial Codes

- +90 Turkey
- +32 Belgium
- +504 Honduras
- +502 Guatemala
- +591 Bolivia
- +675 Papua New Guinea
- +685 Western Samoa

The list is not endless, and a big thank you to members who share this information. Please do share any IRSF, PBX, Mobile frauds with TUFF at [tuff@tuff.co.uk](mailto:tuff@tuff.co.uk)

**Remember to share Non Personal or fraud related Data is within the rules of the DPA/GDPR**



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Occasional Paper

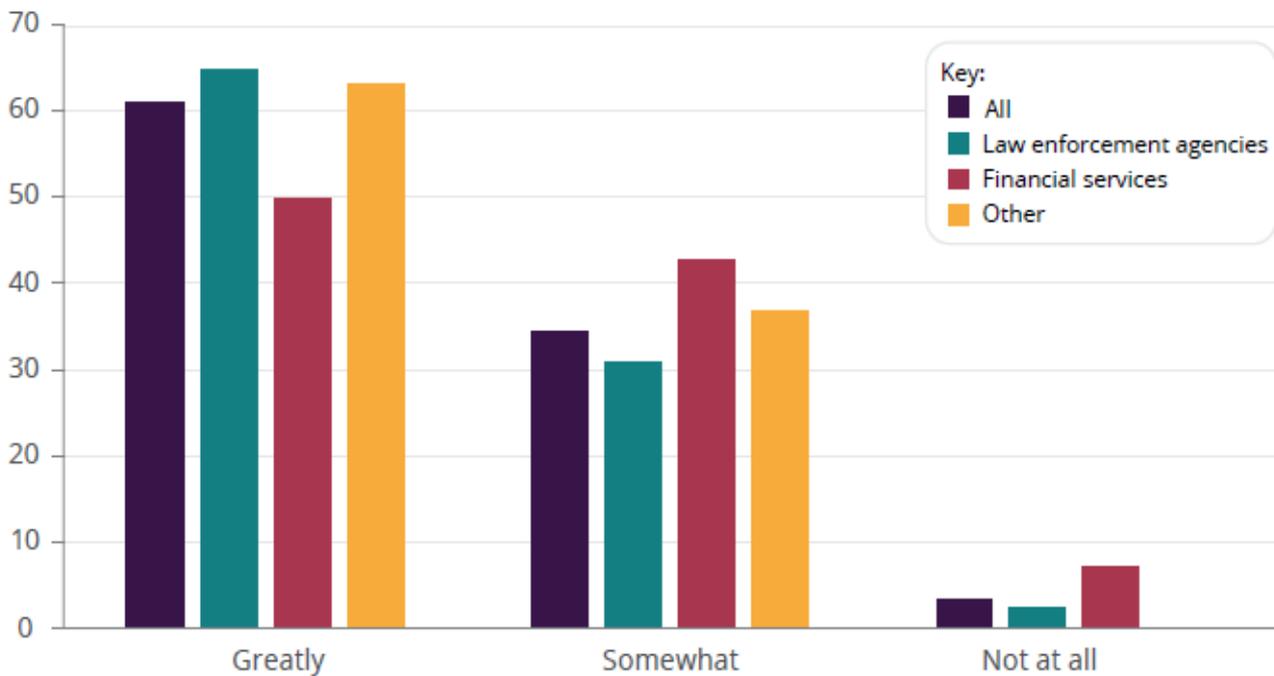
## The UK's Response to Cyber Fraud A Strategic Vision

Sneha Dawda, Ardi Janjeva and Anton Moiseienko

The following extract is from a report Published in 2021 by the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies. The work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution –

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**In your view, to what extent has the coronavirus pandemic increased citizens' vulnerability to cyber-enabled fraud?**



The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)-funded UK Cyber Security Council will provide a single governing voice for the cyber industry to establish the knowledge, skills and experience required for a range of cyber security

jobs, bringing it into line with other professions such as the law, medicine and engineering [www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-cyber-security-council-to-be-official-governing-body-on-training-and-standards](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-cyber-security-council-to-be-official-governing-body-on-training-and-standards)



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## USEFUL WEB PAGES



International Fone Finder:  
[www.fonefinder.net](http://www.fonefinder.net)



Phone-paid Services Authority  
[www.psauthority.org.uk](http://www.psauthority.org.uk)



## USEFUL WEB PAGES



Online look up:  
[www.telecom-tariffs.co.uk/codelook.htm](http://www.telecom-tariffs.co.uk/codelook.htm)



24/7 reporting Fraud & Cybercrime  
[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)



## Classes of TUFF Membership



### Platinum

(Telco Company Membership Category) £5,000 + VAT per annum  
Restricted to UK Based Telecommunication Companies – all of the Gold membership services included within membership, without limitations but subject to fair use policy, plus access to all TUFF information sharing (subject if necessary to information sharing protocols for specific areas)

### Gold

(Industry Related Company Membership Category) £2,750 + VAT per annum Open to companies who service the Telco sector within the UK as well as companies based overseas.

### Silver

(SME's Membership Category) £1,700 + VAT per annum  
Open to Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's with less than £5 million pounds sterling turnover per year).

### Bronze

(Individual/Private Membership Category) £85 + VAT per annum  
Open to Individuals not resident in UK and also to private individuals not directly employed or associated with the UK telecommunications industry or related industries.